

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 01979 211827Z

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7060

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DEPT PASS SECRETARY AND INFO ADDRESSEES IN REFTELS A & B

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDF-3

TAGS: PFOR, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION

REF: (A) STATE 13817; (B) STATE 13818; (C) PARIS 1870;

(D) PARIS 1928

1. REFTEL (D) PROVIDED TEXT OF FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES' STATEMENT WEDNESDAY THAT GOF PLANNING TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF TAKING NEW MEDIATION INITIATIVE IN LEBANON IN THE EVENT PRESENT EFFORTS BY SYRIA ARE UNSUCCESSFUL. SERVANT, QUAI ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR LEVANT, CALLED AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT HIT THE NEWS TICKERS TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF SAUVAGNARGUES' STATEMENT THAT ANY FRENCH INITIATIVE DEPENDS ON THE OUTCOME OF PRESENT TALKS BETWEEN ASAD AND FRANGIE. SERVANT SAID THAT IF THE TALKS ARE SUCCESSFUL, WE MAY BE ON THE ROAD TO PEACE PROVIDED FRANGIE CAN MAKE THE CHRISTIANS STICK TO THE AGREEMENT, AND A GOF INITIATIVE WILL NOT BE NECESSARY. IF THE TALKS FAIL, THE SITUATION IN LEBANON WILL REALLY BE DESPERATE, AND INTERNATIONAL ACTION WILL BE AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY. WHAT SAUVAGNARGUES WAS SAYING, THEREFORE, IS THAT FRANCE WILL BE READY TO
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PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN THE EVENT THIS LAST CHANCE

OPPORTUNITY FAILS THE WAY ALL PREVIOUS EFFORTS FAILED.

2. WHEN I SAW SAUVAGNARGUES TUESDAY NIGHT (REF C) I HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT GOF WOULD NOT BE TAKING ANY IMMEDIATE ACTION ON OUR PROPOSAL UNTIL AFTER THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAD A CHANCE TO MEET WITH YOU IN BRUSSELS. APPARENTLY THE DECISION TO HAVE SAUVAGNARGUES BEGIN TO EXPLORE A POSSIBLE FRENCH INITIATIVE IN LEBANON WAS TAKEN DURING WEDNESDAY'S COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING, AND THEN ANNOUNCED IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER. I THINK THIS IS AN EXCELLENT BEGINNING AND IS CERTAINLY AS MUCH AS WE COULD HAVE HOPED FOR AS AN INITIAL FRENCH RESPONSE. I KNOW YOU WILL PURSUE THIS FURTHER WITH SAUVAGNARGUES IN BRUSSELS AT THE END OF THE WEEK.
RUSH

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